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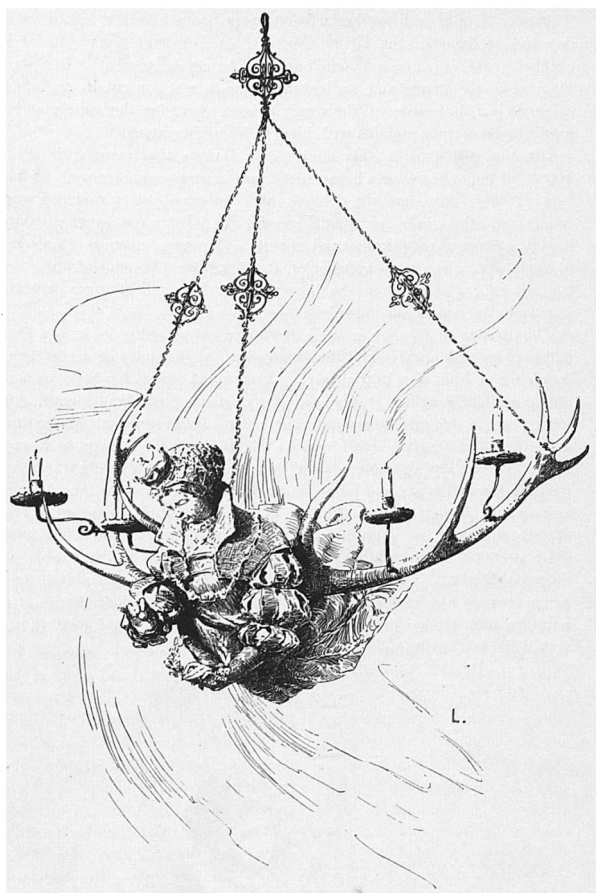
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MEDIAEVAL HALL LIGHT, IN W. H. LIPPINCOTT'S STUDIO.

"OLD MASTERS" TO ORDER.

THERE must be a veritable mine of "old masters" in the interior of this State. Only a week ago I chronicled a Syracuse Michael Angelo. Now a Rochester Rubens is on view here. It is exhibited, its owners say, for the purpose of giving the public an opportunity to enjoy and judge of the work of the great Flemish master, and no admission fee is charged to the show. To further demonstrate their liberality, the owners exhibit it in a dark room by the light of a couple of oil lamps. They make this additional sacrifice because, they say, the lamp-light mellow and enriches the color of the picture. They tell a brilliantly original story of the discovery of this masterpiece in a Rochester junk shop, buried in rubbish, and produce a Canadian professor of the fine arts to swear to its authenticity.

The evident purpose of this dark conspiracy is to secure for the battered and mutilated canvas a metropolitan advertisement which will be of use in marketing it in the rural districts, where a certain amount of besotted devotion to the "old masters" still lingers. The picture, even seen in the friendly half light of the oil lamps, shows none of the qualities of the great statesman-artist. It is a fragment cut from a larger picture, and is purely French in quality. The figures, which are held to represent Bacchus and Ariadne, with a Cupid thrown in for good measure, have the lean and nervous character of the conventional French decorative painters, not the robust presence of the Flamand's joyously animal types. Rubens never painted a lean and hungry Cupid in his life, and in his women especially developed his fondness for the fleshy and voluptuous type of the race.

Some years ago Dundas, Dick & Co. used to advertise their patent medicine by similar works of art, nailed on the housewalls of our street corners.—*From To-Day.*

THE PURPOSE OF ART.

ART and poetry have their good mission, and great art, like great poetry, must necessarily have that in it which you do not have in every day life, or you might as well sweep them away altogether, leaving us only with the pretty picture of the dressed-up baby and jingling words to a song, while the soul remains untouched and the commonplace reigns around. No man is purer than Tennyson, and no one, I presume, would think to accuse him of obscenity, and yet he has written things in his finest poetry that you would not speak about in a drawing-room. And so might there be things that you would not call attention to in a picture, while all the time it is recognized as absolutely right that they should be there.

The greatest art is that which deals with types and which appeals to the imagination and not merely to the eye. We do not want to merely closely copy nature, whether the subject be children playing with flowers, or portraiture, or any other pictorial representation of the kind. The photographic lens will accomplish that better and far more accurately than I or any other artist can hope to do. But it is the soul that a man puts upon the canvas for the delight and improvement of his fellow-men that the lens cannot accomplish, and this cannot be done without full and proper and I may say the only study, for the expression of that art would only become ridiculous and grotesque if the structure were not properly and truthfully placed before the spectator.

To emasculate art by suppressing the study and representation of the nude—which is the highest form of pictorial art—is simply prudery, not delicacy, with the only result of setting narrow limits to our art and putting blinkers on our imagination, and such an emasculated art must fail to rise to the higher sensibility. I can say from my own very long experience, first, that I have never seen the slightest sign of any "degradation" whatever in any model I have ever employed. I have always found them quite modest in their manner and I have always treated them as I would treat any lady in the land, and as far as I know all artists do the same; second, I most distinctly state that I have never seen the least approach to or hint of any indecent remark, improper conduct, ribaldry or immorality from any member of any life school. But then I must admit that it never occurred to me to suspect or watch for any; and third, I would say that only a bad or singularly constituted mind would consider that the undraping of the figure for the purpose of art robbed a woman of her modesty or destroyed her respectability.

LONDON, October, 1885.

GEORGE FREDERICK WATTS.

PUBLIC STATUES IN NEW YORK.

IN his address at the unveiling of the statue of the late William E. Dodge last week, Hon. Abram S. Hewitt directed attention to the fact that we have not yet erected statues to Fulton, who gave us steam navigation, or to De Witt Clinton, who made New York the commercial metropolis of the New World by creating the Erie Canal. "The highest honor or which can be paid to a citizen," as Mr. Hewitt described, "the preservation of the memory and features in bronze or marble for the reverent homage of future generations," might very appropriately be paid to these benefactors, and also to Washington Irving, a citizen of New York who figures in history as the father of American literature, and to Henry Hudson, who 196 years ago sailed up New York Harbor, the first white man to enter the mouth of the great river which bears his name. Four years hence the bi-centenary of his discovery will be celebrated, and the erection of a statue of him would be an eminently fit feature of the event. Christopher Columbus, too, should have a monument in New York, and the 400th anniversary of his discovery of America, to be celebrated seven years hence, will be a suitable time for that tribute to his memory by the greatest city of the world which he discovered. We need more statuary of the right kind, and if the ancient Romans could inspire lofty aspirations in their children by decorating their walls with pictures of their heroic ancestors, certainly the youth of New York may be benefited by the exhibition in bronze or marble of the features of men who have distinguished themselves in modern times by great achievements.—*N. Y. Mail and Express.*

LAST year William T. Trego, the able and worthy painter of military pictures in Philadelphia, was awarded a Temple historical prize medal for a picture shown at the local Academy of Fine Arts, his picture being the only one to receive any recognition. He claimed that he should have received the first prize of \$3,000, as his picture was, by the allotment of the solitary award, conceded to be the best shown in the competition. The Committee of Awards did not agree with him, and he sued them. Trego has been defeated in his claim. The Court of Common Pleas last week sustained the right of the Academy to decide what prize a picture is worth. The artist threatens to carry the case to the Supreme Court.

THE Society of American Artists will, in all likelihood, give its exhibition next spring at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. It was the society's intention to make its exhibition of this year, but the Watt's pictures got possession of the gallery ahead of it and left it houseless.